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CÆDMON AND THE RUTHWELL CROSS.

In the belief that those students of Old English who have not ready access to the original will welcome the presentation of BUGGE's views concerning the Ruthwell Cross, as they appeared last year in the third and concluding part of his 'Studien über die Entstehung der nordischen Götter- und Heldensagen,' I subjoin a translation into English from the German of BRENNER (pp. 494-6). I have only to add that I fully concur in his rejection of STEPHENS' interpretation, while reserving my opinion concerning his own surmises.

"STEPHENS assigns the Ruthwell Cross to about the year 680 A. D. This opinion he based on the inscription at the top, which he reads as 'CADMON made me' ('Run. Mon.' pp. 419, 920), and understands by them, 'CADMON composed the verses which are found on this cross.' The CADMON mentioned he regards as identical with the poet CÆDMON, whose story is related by BEDE; *fauæpo* he explains as 3d sing. pret. of the verb which occurs in West Saxon as *fēgean*. This explanation of *mæfauæpo*, as both SWEET and I have already pointed out ('Oldest English Texts' p. 125; 'Studien' pp. 42-44), is impossible, and contains a number of gross errors. In Old Northumbrian the accusative *me* is *mec*, not *mæ*. But even were the reading *me*, this, according to the language of other inscriptions, could only denote the cross, and would have no reference to the authorship of the verses. According to STEPHENS, the *u* in *fauæ}o* represents *w*, but everywhere else on the cross *w* is represented by an entirely different rune. STEPHENS would interpret *fauæpo* as the 3d sing. pret. of *fēgan*, *fēgean*, but in the dialect of the Ruthwell Cross this could only appear as *fægðæ*. Not merely does the *a* contradict STEPHENS' explanation, but the *u*, the *æ*, the *þ*, and the *o* as well. *Fauæpo* can not be the 3d sing. pret. of any weak verb whatever, for the ending of the weak verb after a vowel is never *-po* in Old Northumbrian, but *-dæ*, and is so found on the Ruthwell Cross itself. STEPHENS has confused the O. E. *fēgan*, *fēgean* (German *fügen*) with the entirely different Old Norse verb *fá*, which never signifies 'compose,' 'versify.'

"Since, according to GEO. F. BLACK

(*Academy* for Oct. 1, 1887), *cadmon* is now illegible, and since *mæfauæpo* can not mean what STEPHENS asserts it to mean, the date of the Ruthwell Cross can not be determined by STEPHENS' reading and translation of the inscription on the top stone. Though I have not seen the stone itself, I do not hesitate to propose another explanation; but in any case, whether the latter is correct or not, STEPHENS' interpretation is impossible. *Mæ* signifies 'more'; *æpo* is the regular Old Northumbrian form of the verb '(I) destroy.' Upon this firm foundation the explanation must be constructed. On the western side of the top stone is a representation of John the Evangelist with the eagle, and around it is the inscription in Latin letters, "in princ[ipio erat] verbum," the first words of the Gospel of John. On the eastern side, according to STEPHENS, is sculptured the dove with the olive branch.

"We should be warranted in supposing that the inscription on the eastern, as well as on the western side, has reference to the corresponding sculpture, and, as on the western side, the writing must have been above the relief. I should surmise that the complete inscription on the eastern side of the top stone was originally [*icne*] *godmon mæfahæpo*. *ICNE* would then have stood above the carved figure, just as *erat*, which has been conjecturally supplied, did upon the opposite side. My emendation, *godmon*, differs but slightly in its Runic form from STEPHENS' reading, *cadmon*. Finally I conjecture that the *u* in *fauæpo* is a false reading for the runic letter which stands for *h* in the word *almehttig* on the Ruthwell Cross, the tops of both letters being of the same shape.

[*ic ne*] *god mon*
mæ fah æpo

is a regular couplet, which would signify: (I, God, no longer destroy man in anger (inimically).'

"This is accordingly a poetical paraphrase of God's word to Noah in Gen. 8. 21: 'I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake . . . neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.' The inscription is therefore entirely suitable to the representation which it encloses, that of the dove with the olive branch.

"SWEET has affirmed ('Oldest English Texts,' p. 125) that the language of the inscription shows that it cannot well be later than the middle of the eighth century, and this position seems to me to be well taken (I would refer especially to the forms *rodi* and *ungket*). SOPHUS MÜLLER is inclined to fix the date of the Ruthwell Cross at about the year 1000 (*Aarbøger for nord. Oldkynd.* 1880, p. 338 ff.). I am not capable of forming an opinion concerning the archæological grounds on which he bases his judgment, but the language of the inscription seems to me decisive against so late a period. Apparently everything is in favor of assigning the same date to the Bewcastle Cross as to the Ruthwell Cross."

The opinion of SOPHUS MÜLLER is more fully reproduced on pp. 44-45 of BRENNER's translation: "But the Danish archæologist SOPHUS MÜLLER concludes, as he obligingly informs me, that the Ruthwell Cross must be posterior to the year 800, and in fact to the Carolingian Renaissance, on account of its decorative features. The free foliage and flower-work, and the dragons or monsters with fore-legs, wings and serpents' tails, induce him to believe that it could scarcely have been sculptured much before 1000 A. D."

ALBERT S. COOK.

Yale University.

MATERIAM SUPERABAT OPUS.

OID, in his description of the Palace of the Sun, writes: "*Materiam superabat Opus.*" That is a good motto for Æsthetics. It means enough, and in expression is apt enough, for a handy rule. Take any work proffered as art and the test question is, Does the workmanship surpass the material? It is the workmanship, and not the material, that constitutes art. We flounder often in discriminating, in a dazzling mass of material, the workmanship. Splendid material can hide a multitude of the artist's faults.

'Paradise Lost' is a grand mass of fine material. We are so overwhelmed with the material as not to see clearly the workmanship. As a piece of work it lacks of being a piece of fine art. The noise is made about Satan's loss of heaven, and not about Man's

loss of Eden. The fall of Man is a mere incident to the fall of Satan; it occupies the place of an incident. Satan's fall is the gorgeous front of the edifice, while Man's fall is the hinder part. The theme of 'Paradise Lost' demands that the effect—the fall of Man—be made more prominent than the cause—the fall of Satan.

Suppose we compare MILTON's Satan with SHAKESPEARE's Iago. We are pleased with the *material* of Satan. There is not a lovable piece of material in Iago, yet we admire the *work*. Satan is a hero. Is Iago? Satan draws us by all that we cherish in the heroes of history. He is the chief of the many throned powers that led the embattled seraphim to war on the plains of heaven.

His "mighty stature" accords well with his position. Notice him as he moves towards the shore of the "oblivious pool" to arouse his faithful followers:

..... "his ponderous shield
Ethereal temper, massy, large, and round
Behind him cast. The broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb
Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views
At evening."

"His spear—to equal which the tallest pine,
Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast
On some great admiral, were but a wand."

And when his faithful are gathered from the pool,

"He, above the rest
In shape and gesture proudly eminent,
Stood like a tower."

He looked upon

"Millions of spirits for his fault amerced
Of heaven, and from eternal splendors flung
For his revolt; yet faithful how they stood
Their glory withered."

"He now prepared
To speak:
..... attention held them mute.
Thrice he assayed, and thrice, in spite of scorn,
Tears, such as angels weep, burst forth; at last
Words interwove with sighs find out their way."

That was heroism, too. He had the heart of a hero. Satan had a cause worthy of a hero, namely, "to regain those blissful seats." He had the following of a hero, too:

"Princes, Potentates,
Warriors, the flower of heaven, ..
..... powers
Matchless, but with the Almighty."